



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on January 14, 2021

Koch & Other GOP Megadonors May Cut Cash to Lawmakers Who Supported Trump Fraud Claims

The money barons of the GOP establishment have had enough of the Trump era.

The Koch network, one of the most powerful forces in Republican politics, said the actions of members of Congress in the days prior to last week's breach of the Capitol will "weigh heavy" in their minds when it comes to deciding who will get future donations and who won't — indicating that the party's megadonors are displeased with the president and others who have challenged the fraud-ridden results of the 2020 election.

In a [statement](#) given to Politico, the Koch network said it will take the events of last week strongly into consideration when deciding in whose campaigns it will invest the millions of dollars at its disposal for the next election cycle.

"Lawmakers' actions leading up to and during last week's insurrection will weigh heavy in our evaluation of future support. And we will continue to look for ways to support those policymakers who reject the politics of division and work together to move our country forward," said Emily Seidel, CEO of Americans for Prosperity and senior advisor to AFP Action, the group's super PAC.

Seidel's remarks come after the Koch network has of late made moves to work more independently of the GOP, as billionaire Charles Koch has been unsatisfied with the platform and policies of President Trump, refusing to support the New York media tycoon-turned political powerhouse in either 2016 or 2020.

As Politico notes, it isn't only the Kochs who are using the power of the purse to bring Republicans in line with the establishment:

The Koch move comes after numerous corporate PACs began suspending their donations to Republicans who challenged President-elect Joe Biden's victory last week. Many of those businesses were acting in response to pressure from clients and customers. The Koch action, coming amid a resounding silence among Trump allies, suggests that megadonors — a small class of brand-name billionaires who give from tens to hundreds of millions of dollars per election cycle — also feel that their reputations are on the line if they back lawmakers who supported Trump's claims of election fraud.

Key GOP donors including the Ricketts family of Chicago, Home Depot co-founder Bernie Marcus and financier Ken Griffin declined to comment on their giving plans in the wake of the attack on the Capitol. While some are expected to continue backing candidates that are



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aligned with Trump — Chicago Cubs co-owner Todd Ricketts is the Republican National Committee finance chair — their unwillingness to defend the president and his supporters at a crucial moment could be a sign of their discomfort with the direction of the party.

Even some of the megadonors most loyal to President Trump have wavered in their support of him. Before passing away this week, billionaire casino man Sheldon Adelson, who spent over \$75 million to help reelect the president, had reportedly become uncomfortable with the claims of election fraud and even allowed his newspaper, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, to editorialize against the Republican head of state.

Blackstone CEO Steve Schwarzman, an unofficial Trump advisor, has been calling for a transition to a Biden administration and disapproved of the events at the Capitol last week.

“The insurrection that followed the President’s remarks today is appalling and an affront to the democratic values we hold dear as Americans. I am shocked and horrified by this mob’s attempt to undermine our constitution,” Schwarzman said of the incident. “As I said in November, the outcome of the election is very clear and there must be a peaceful transition of power.”

The donor issue places some spotlight on Florida Senator Rick Scott, the incoming chair of the National Republican Senatorial Committee. Scott, the former governor of Florida who beat out longtime Democrat Bill Nelson in the 2018 Senate race, voted against certifying Pennsylvania’s election results.

Sources familiar with the matter say Scott has had to reassure angry donors that he is still apt to lead the committee, which has the responsibility of fundraising to elect and reelect Republicans to the Senate.

Asked about Scott’s efforts to assuage donor concerns, NRSC spokesperson Chris Hartline said in a statement, “Chairman Scott has been having great conversations with donors, activists, and Republican senators over the last few days. Everyone is focused on the challenge ahead and excited to get to work to win back the Senate majority.”

President Trump has increasingly had to rely on small-dollar donations instead of megadonor money. This should be a lesson to all constitutionalists: Never accept the free lunch. Sooner or later, the fat cats will be at your door to collect on their investment.



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